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DE RUEHKO #2719/01 1370953
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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2191
INFO RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE
RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 6255
RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA 6217
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA 8884
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 9473
RUEHKS/AMCONSUL SAPPORO 7418
RUEHRC/USDA FAS WASHDC 8255
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 002719

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AIAG AMBASSADOR LANGE
DEPT FOR OES/IHA SINGER AND FENDRICK
DEPT FOR EAP/J
USDA PASS TO APHIS
HHS PASS TO CDC
HHS FOR OGHA STEIGER, BHAT AND ELVANDER
DEPT PASS TO AID/GH/HIDN DENNIS CARROLL

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [TBIO](#) [KFLU](#) [KSTH](#) [ECON](#) [PREL](#) [SOCI](#) [WHO](#) [JA](#)
SUBJECT: AVIAN INFLUENZA: JAPAN WEEKLY REPORT MAY 17

REF: A. 05 STATE 153802
[1](#)B. TOKYO 2572 AND PREVIOUS
[1](#)C. TOKYO 295
[1](#)D. TOKYO 729
[1](#)E. 05 TOKYO 5594

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[1](#)1. The following is an update on avian influenza (AI) developments in Japan for the period May 11 to 17. No human or animal outbreaks of H5N1 avian influenza were reported in Japan during the above period.

-- More Positive Cases from Last Year --

[1](#)2. The Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare (MHLW) announced on May 11 that the total number of individuals likely infected by the H5N2 low pathogenic avian influenza virus in Ibaraki and Saitama prefectures in 2005 now totals [1](#)93. The Ministry said that none of the individuals developed symptoms and there was no threat for further transmission of the virus. The National Institute of Infectious Diseases (NIID) surveyed a total of 399 individuals, which included the employees of 41 poultry farms that experienced outbreaks of H5N2 and officials who worked on containment and outbreak control efforts. In addition to the 77 individuals who tested positive during last year's tests, 16 additional people were newly determined as having been positive for H5N2 antibodies. (For more see ref C).

-- Electrolyzed Water Technology to Kill the AI Virus? --

[1](#)3. Researchers at Tottori University and the Sanyo Electric Company announced on May 15 that they were able to suppress 99% of airborne avian influenza viruses by applying electrolysis to tap water and using the electrolyzed water technology in a spray mist and air filter that would then come into contact with the virus. The researchers said that it is possible that one portion of the virus's surface structure is destroyed when it comes

into contact with electrolyzed water. Sanyo Electric has previously commercialized appliances that use electrolyzed water to kill viruses in air purifiers, humidifiers and washing machines that do not require detergents. The company would like to apply the technology to purify air in public conveyances such as aircraft and train carriages. Further details can be found in a Sanyo press release:

-- Questions Remain on the Origin of Ibaraki Outbreaks --

14. On May 15, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) announced that its investigation into last year's Ibaraki avian influenza outbreaks (ref D) showed that there was something "abnormal" behind the infections. Investigators injected the virus harvested from confirmed infected chickens into healthy chickens and "Aigamo" or rice ducks. (Note: the Aigamo is a cross between a wild duck and a domestic duck, and is often used to control weed growth in rice paddies). The investigators learned that the chickens became highly infected but the rice ducks did not, indicating that this was not a typical avian influenza virus. While the route of infection is still disputed, some team members said that it was possible the cause of the outbreak was from the use of an illegal vaccine produced in Central America (see ref E). However, a MAFF official told EST FSN that the Ministry could not confirm or deny this possibility due to the lack of any physical evidence. The Ministry has created a team of MAFF experts to study the route of infection. The team concluded that the possibility of migratory birds being the source of the outbreak was low due to the fact that the birds studied developed antibodies to the virus very quickly within five to seven days, rather than the typical 10-14 day incubation period after infection.

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-- MAFF to Partially Lift UK Import Ban --

15. MAFF announced on May 15 that it was planning to soon lift the complete ban on chicken imports from the United Kingdom that was put into place on April 29. The ban will continue to apply to the Norfolk county area, the site of a recent low pathogenic H7N3 avian influenza outbreak.

DONOVAN